



TAC Tanker Tales



Volume 6 Issue 2

December 2005

Registration Time Once Again-You Know the Drill

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Our TAC Tanker Cruisers

(left to right)
Bud & June Wedel,
Bobbe Boyington,
Annella & Bill Szanyi,
Mary & Harvey Jenkins,
Pappy Boyington,
Dean & Roy Marler,
Helen and Ted Raschke

Happy Thanksgiving! The Editor and I just returned from a wonderful visit with Harvey and Betsy Lee in Hawaii and en route we were privileged to meet with Joe and Jean Furukawa in Los Angeles.

Now we are back to slaving over the newsletter. One of the pages of this issue is yellow. It is the Registration Form for reunion #7 at Wright Pat. Activities are listed on both sides with per person costs. Be certain to fill in all the boxes and return with your check, to the TAC address (on left of this page) by April 10.

At that time we will finalize the transportation needs. If you need wheelchair transportation to any of the events, let us know as our chartered buses have

that special capability.

We have had excellent response for this reunion, so when you call to request your room, if the Hope Hotel is full be sure to ask for info on nearby facilities.

The Hill Staff will be going to Wright Patterson this month to finalize details with the Museum, Base Club, hotel and several of our tour sites, AND check out the monument progress in the Memorial Garden. This year the Dedication will be the Memorial Service.

Our Dues Notices are going out separately this month. If you receive one, the renewal must be returned by 1 Mar 06 for you to be listed in the Yellow Book for this year. Nate and Natalie

A Report From the Cruisers

By Pappy Boyington

Attention and Excellent: our waiter's two favorite expressions. The former was a plea for us to quiet down so he could preview the five course menu or make other announcements we would find useful. The latter was his vote of approval on our individual menu selections. Celebrity Cruise Line has a well deserved reputation as among the best in cruise cuisine.

Excellent applies equally to all elements of our collective cruise experience: Fantastic food, Convivial company, Lounge musicians, Exotic shore excursions, Table talk and Diversion, games and contests. Bill and Annella enjoyed the Trivia contest and watching flying fish race the ship. Ted and Helen had one eye on the TV to keep track of Wilma. Roy and Dean were struck by the friendly, courteous locals. An excursion tour mate was struck literally. Ask them about their adventure when you see them in Dayton. Harvey and Mary were joined by his sister Reitha and brother-in-law, Ralph. They liked the shows and the sound of the payoff in the casino.

The gents had visited Bermuda many times, but this was the first time

for a relaxed visit devoted to actually "seeing the Islands." It was in effect a first visit. All agreed the food exceeded our expectations and we have the avoirdupois to prove it. The weather was a crap shoot and we won. A great value when you consider all meals (18 a day) were included in the price.

All "No-Shows" eat your heart out. Anyone for an Alaska Cruise? See you in Dayton and tell you all about it.



The President's Corner

By Bill Wolford

Happy Holidays to all our friends. I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving as we did here in Vermont, snow and all. It is such a privilege and joy to live in this wonderful country where we have such freedom and opportunity. We are truly the light of the whole world. We who are former members of the military and families know the price of this freedom.

I want to take this opportunity to thank and pray for all of our military and civilians serving around the world, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq. May God bless and protect each one of them and bring them home safely at the end of their tours of duty.

Shirley and I spent most of the month of October in Israel celebrating Succot (the biblical Feast of Tabernacles). What a fantastic experience to be in Sultans Pool, an amphitheatre just below the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem where we enjoyed a time of fellowship, song and dance with over six thousand Christians and Jews from all over the world.

I'm looking forward to seeing each and everyone of you at the Memorial Dedication Service at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio next May. This is the time that we remember all of our comrades who have made their final flight and are leading the way home. I wanted you all to know how much it means to me that we have these wonderful times of remembrance and fellowship.

May you have a joyous Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year and Happy Hannucha, which is a holiday to remind us of the faithfulness of God.

Memorial Update

By Dan Weber, Chairman, Board of Directors

This is the best news I have to pass on to the membership: the TAC Tankers memorial stone is in place, the foundation concrete work complete, landscaping finished, the check turned over to Dodds Monuments and everything looks great. We did it! I say again, We Did It!!

What started out as an idea for, perhaps, a stone bench with our organization name on it gradually evolved into a beautiful piece of stone with attractive etchings on front and back which will sit there for perpetuity as our legacy to the Cold War and the USAF.

I had some doubts when we first started out as I was calling all over the country talking to stone companies, organizations that had memorials in place at W-PAFB or elsewhere, and individuals I thought could help me, and then I finally hooked up with Dodds Monuments in Xenia. At that point it became a lot less daunting.

However, it was still troubling to do this by e-mail and phone calls, so I must give credit to the members of our organization who became involved. Ted Buck and Ruf Mewborn traveled to Ohio and met up with Nate Hill to help select the stone. Then Ruf went up to Washington CD to get photos of the Mackay Trophy so it could be engraved on the stone.

Ruf also did the text work on the stone with his computer and working

with our Historian John Bessette also did the patches and dates. John made a trip or two to Maxwell AFB to acquire this data.

Of course, I must thank our Treasurer, Bo Ault, for a number of late night phone calls he, Nate, and I had discussing the financing of this project. The conference all worked great.

Finally, I must tip my hat to our Dodds point of contact, Larry Morrison, who worked very well with us on this project and had a lot of patience early on as we modified our ideas.

In May, at our next reunion, we will have the dedication of our memorial and we are now working on the script for the ceremony. We hope for a "max effort" in attendance there at the museum. I feel that the entire membership can be very proud of what has been accomplished and will take pride in the memorial.

Early on, I ended some of the e-mails with KB-50 check list items such as "Start Engines," and "Gear Up. We are not finished yet, but I think we can now go so far as to run the "Engine Shut Down" checklist."

Barb and I look forward to seeing all of you at the May 2006 reunion and we know you will enjoy it. In the meantime, Barb and I wish all of you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a most Happy New Year. Dan

New Life Members

Vic V. Ventura, Vacaville CA-431
Robert (Jeff) J. Stanley, Montpelier VT-4505
CAMS

Welcome New Members

John E. Mathews, Manchaca TX-622, 421
Robert J. Schlehs, Marinette WI-431

Memorial Donations List (as of

6/2) George Burall Rip
Collins Bill Dick-
son Myron Driskell
Harold Elliott Jerry Garber
Frank Gawell Max Gillaspie
David Gruneisen D.D. Hartzell
Harvey Jenkins Harvey Lee
Nina McCarville Anne Mills
Chuck Monka Jack Nicewander
James O'Dell Tony Pronier
Doyle Reid Gil Switzer
Dan Weber Thomas Wedel
Vern Williamson

(as of September 1, 2005)

John Bessette Ray Donaghue
Carole (Palmer) Crabb
Archie Graham Geech Hamilton
Charlie Harrell William Hays
Irv (Roy) Marler Ed Moore
Willie Perry Gary Pflughaup
Rick Peters Bob Sturdevant
Bill Szanyi (Ooops! left off list in
the last issue)

(as of December 1, 2005)

Robert Archer Tom Cookston
T.P. Fowler George Ganjon
Jack Gilpin Tom Grey
Nate Hill Marie Macko



Letters Received
From Our New Members



Robert J. Schleibs of Marinette WI (October 2005)

I reported into the 431st AREFS at Biggs AFB, Texas in Sept. 1962. I was a refueling operator till we disbanded in March 1965, then I went on to Sewart AFB, Tennessee till I got discharged in May 1965.

For the past 37 years, I've worked at Scott Paper Co./Kimberly-Clark Corp in Marinette, WI. I retired on 10-1-2005.

Six of us Reel Operators from the 431st had a mini-reunion in Oregon in Sept. 2005. They were Roy Thompson (see story on other page), Vic Ventura, Bob Dorn, Larry Meyer, and Ken Little. Great Times were had by all. Looking forward to the Wright-Patterson Reunion next May-2006.

Vic Ventura of Vacaville CA (August 2005)

Went to Langley when squadron closed. Loadmaster through December 1966 at Mac Tan 772. Got out and went to Fresno State ROTC. Became a pilot at Mather, Norton and Travis. Retired in 1986, then hired at PSA, then US Air. Retired in 2003 (again). Play lots of golf and am also a rules official for the Northern California Golf Association. See you all at Wright-Patterson.

Feedback from the Hurricane Article in Sept. Issue
By Don Wadsworth

Tanker Tales arrived last week and as usual I stopped everything to read it. Of course I didn't have much to stop. Think I was watching "Days Of Our Lives", so put it on the VCR and opened the Tales. Was very good as usual.

I remember that night with the hurricane very well. I have no idea whether we just got caught late or that evacuation wasn't required. No one would tell a Navigator important stuff like that. Just go with your crew and if we feel its important we will let you know.

So spent the night out there with Fred Mayberry and God knows who else. I remember that I spent most of the night on the floor of the Nav compartment trying to find a comfortable position. I also found out that unpresurized airplanes leak pretty badly. No matter where I ended up a drip came along the move. I don't mean the copilot either. Anyhow that was the first and last time I had to do that. I did log a night celestial over water Nav mission so it wasn't all for naught. I don't remember if the Wing commander got the Legion of Merit for saving all that gasoline or not. Anyhow its one of those old memories that you never forget. Always worth a laugh!

Historian's Corner

by John Bessette

1960 Hurricane Donna at Langley (continued)

In the Sept. Newsletter, I discussed the hurricane which struck Langley AFB in September 1960, leaving several KB-50 tankers and crews on the apron, coping all night with the thing. I asked for any other memories of that that event. Bob Thomas, a 429th crew chief, replied with his vivid memories, slightly edited: h

"We were called out in the evening or night to evacuate the aircraft remaining at home base Langley...the order was probably given late, but most of the aircraft in the two squadrons got airborne. The aircraft departing in front of us was crabbing (seemed to about 25 degrees) to the left just to trace over the runway on departure. I could see the left refueling operator as we lined up for takeoff behind them. This worried me because wind velocity and peak gust were increasing by the minute. I was actually relieved with the order to stop the evacuation. There was no margin for error on the pilot's ability. We spent a rough night on board the aircraft along with about 7 or 9 other aircraft, spaced well apart for turning throughout the night. On my aircraft, we divided into two crews. The A/C, myself, and one refueling operator were the first crew and the Pilot, Engineer and the other RO were the second crew to stand watch, start engines and turn the aircraft into the wind as directed by wind direction.

"No one got much sleep that night with the aircraft bouncing up and down 6-8 inches, the howling of the wind that was equal to our lift-off speed, and the rain hammering the aircraft. My recollection of the wind was 91 knots with gusts above that. I remember seeing a 50 or so foot section of hangar guttering go vertical into the wind and I watched to see if it hit any aircraft with engines running while turning into the wind. Luckily, the guttering missed all the aircraft and probably ended up in an oyster bed in Back River, east of Langley. This caused me to worry a bit about other debris, like 55 gal. drums., etc., hitting aircraft. I remember that we let the APU (Aux Power Unit) run all night for radio use and engine starts all night long.

"So the bottom line as I recall it was: there was an evacuation plan, most got airborne, some didn't when the cross-wind component was too high. The rest of us had a long and shaky night, but it was just another in the life of the TAC Tanker guys, who faced danger on every mission, but were too young and too gung-ho to quit or stop what we were doing."

Bob had been crew chief on KB-50 , 49-335, which was totaled in an accident on 10 August 1960, and he was aboard. We'll discuss that in the next column!

420th and the AF Outstanding Unit Award

As mentioned in September, I have compiled all the evidence supporting the 420th having been awarded the AFOUA, and I have mailed it to the AF Historical Research Agency, seeking a correction to the AF's database. We await their reply.

Unit
I
Histories
now have a complete set of the 420th histories all the way from March 1954 to March 1964. Next I'll be completing the 622nd histories, now that I have some clues where to go via a phone call

The 431st. Mini-Reunion in Medford, Oregon

By Roy Thompson

In the beginning there were seven first term Airmen assigned to the 431st at Biggs AFB. Nearly 40 years later, they are still friends, even though their lives have all taken different paths. Friday, September 23, 2005, would find these guys and wives in Medford, Oregon.

After checking into our hotels (the Red Lion booked us into three different hotels) —Natalie, where were you when we needed you? We headed to the nearest watering hole. After a couple of hours of trying to catch up on the past ten years of news, it was decided to adjourn for dinner.

A three car caravan proceeded up I-5 to Grant's Pass, Oregon, and straight to the Elks Lodge. Once again we had to have some liquid refreshments to clear the dust from our throats. At the proper time the Elks served us a very fine steak and shrimp dinner. Thanks to Ken Little for the planning.

After dinner, we had a meeting to take care of some new business. It had been proposed by Fred Gardner that our group should be known by a name that reflected our important contribution to our country. Because a majority was present we decided to vote on the motion. The vote was unanimous.

I'm proud to announce that from hence forth we will officially be known as the "Real Deals."

Because it was getting late it was decided to return to Medford. This time it was a caravan of two. Ken Little lives in Grant's Pass and he doesn't drink like he used to in the Air Force.

The rest of us were able to find a late night place to have a night cap in Medford. There was one problem. We didn't like the Rap Music, so the management moved us to an empty dining room. That was much better. We could actually talk to the person next to you. The hearing aids worked much better and it was a lot closer to the Rest Rooms. Like all good things, it had to come to an end. And the bars in Oregon close at 2 am!!! (More p. 6) The Real Deal Guys: Victor Ventura, Bob Dorn, Roy Thompson, Ken Little, Larry Meyer, Bob Schlehs taken in front



BOOK REVIEW By Jim (Pappy) Boyington

Like BB King (as seen on TV), I have Diabetes. Fortunately, since I had a conscientious G.P., I was diagnosed in the early stages and he started me on the right path. Anyone who is older than 45, overweight, "apple" shape, overfed and under exercised, read oa, especially if pre-diabetes, or diabetes runs in your genes.

My G.P. retired recently, and the lady who took up his practice was even more concerned with my progress (of I should admit, lock thereof). As much as I dislike "pills," she convinced me. She prescribed a med to control my blood sugar level. I restarted by daily two mile walk and continued measuring my blood sugar level daily. I made some progress, but not nearly enough to get to an acceptable blood sugar level.

During all this, on one of my routine trips to the library, two additional ladies came into my life. One an MD, specializing in diabetes management and the other a PH.D, a leading authority on nutrition and weight management. I would like to introduce you to the first.

Anne Peters, MD is author of **Conquering Diabetes: A Cutting Edge Comprehensive Program for Prevention and Treatment**. The book lives up to its ambitious title. Doctor Peters is a researcher, the director of the University of Southern California clinical diabetes programs. In addition, she is in charge of developing the nation's largest outreach program for community-based diabetes prevention and treatment. She is directly involved in treating patients. She reports that as of 2004, only 10% of the people with diabetes are being treated properly.

Want to avoid diabetes and it's complications (which can include heart disease, stroke, blindness, amputation and kidney failure) get acquainted with Dr. Peters and her work.

The book: -Explains how to establish a working relationship with your physician; -Describes the many "Faces" of diabetes; -Helps you create healthy habits (Health Care begins with you); -Gives you an understanding of Type 2 diabetes (the result of your genes and/or life style); and -Provides guidance for mastering Type 1 diabetes (Insulin injections for life).

The back of the slip cover lists eleven tips you can do to conquer pre-diabetes and diabetes. These are simple and practical regimens to keep you on track to good health.

In the next issue of the Tales (March 2006), I will continue to share my good fortune when I was led to Barbara Rolls, PH.D, author of **The Volumetrics Eating Plan: Techniques and Recipes for Feeling Full on Fewer Calories**. Once again, a very ambitious title and again, delivered in full measure.



Aviation buffs mark centennial of Wrights' first practical flight. *By AP writer James Hannah*

Dayton— When Wilbur Wright soared into the sky over Huffman Prairie on Oct. 5, 1905, it was pretty much a private showing. Only a few friends and some local farmers witnessed the historic event.

Thirty-nine minutes and 24 miles later—when Wilbur landed after running out of fuel—the Wrights had made their longest flight. Wilbur and his brother, Orville, declared that they now had the world's first practical airplane.

Up until then, the Wright brothers wanted little attention. They worried that someone might steal their invention and beat them to the patent office.

Part of the reason they chose Huffman Prairie Flying Field is that they were basically ignored out there, " said Bob Petersen, a park ranger for the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park.

This week, the Wright brothers' hometown will shine the spotlight on Huffman Prairie as the city celebrates the 100th anniversary of the famous flight. Relatives of the Wright brothers as well as officials from the Air Force and national Park Service will attend the ceremonies, which will feature flyovers by a replica of the plane that made the historic flight.

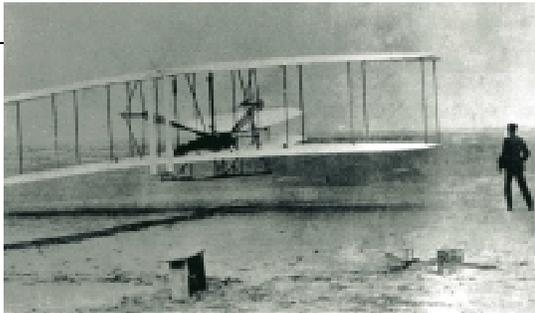
The Wright brothers' first flight occurred Dec. 17, 1903, at Kill Devil Hills, a barren stretch of sand dunes a few miles south of Kitty Hawk, NC. The brothers made four flights that day, the longest lasting 59 seconds.

But the Wrights couldn't steer the plane or be assured it could land safely, so they returned home to Dayton and began working on a maneuverable, controllable aircraft.

When it came time to test the plane, they settled on Huffman Prairie, a seven-sided, 84-acre pasture outside Dayton owned by a family friend. The brothers were told they could use the field as long as they first moved the horses and cows out of the way.

It was at Huffman Prairie that the Wrights tested modifications to their airplane and taught themselves to fly. They confined the flights to airspace over the prairie, not wanting to have to land on someone else's property.

In 1904, the brothers made 105 flights and were in the sky a total of 45 minutes. They made their first turn Sept. 15, 1904, and their first circle five days later. The following year, they made 50 flights and were in the sky 5 hours, 30 minutes.



Chaplain's Corner

By Rev. George Burrows

I need more than a corner to express the joy that should be in your hearts this holiday season! I think of the blessings God has showered upon all of us during our lives. I was praying the other day and I was reviewing with Good, all his blessings in my life. But, I told Him I really was disappointed that I hadn't won the Lottery. All of a sudden a voice came from heaven...."Give me a break... Buy a ticket! Pass it on! In order for you to recognize God's blessings, you've got to buy into his plan. From me to you —God's blessing to



Historian (Cont. from page 3)

Thanks, Jim. More will probably have to await my spring trip to Maxwell.

Aviation in Bermuda

Just this week I was contacted by a British author who is writing a history of aviation in Bermuda and had seen our website. He knows virtually nothing about our refueling efforts from Kindley and has asked for help.

I will send him a write up and photos on the topic. But, I need your help if you can fill me in on your experiences using Kindley in the very early years.

From what I have, it seems we first began to use Kindley systematically in 1957 for refueling on the mid-Atlantic route, using KB-50s.

Does anyone have memories of use earlier, by KB-29s or KB-50s, for refueling missions rather than just navigation training flights.? Please contact me.

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of the Main Fire Place in the Crater Lake Lodge, Oregon.

(Cont from page 4)

Saturday morning,

September 24, would find the "Real Deals" and wives standing in the rain trying to decide what we were going to do after breakfast. Because Larry and Kareen Meyer and Victor and Chris Ventura had arrived a day early, they had already toured the Shakespearian town of Ashland and the historic town of Jacksonville.

Since we all had adventure tendencies, we charged up the hills in our 2 car caravan (Ken rode in Vic's van). All went well except for one stop sign. I really didn't see it. No harm,. No foul.

The rain clouds parted shortly after we left town which afforded us a beautiful view of the early fall colors. About a two hour drive found us at Crater Lake. Not a cloud in the sky made for a picture post card view of a lake in what used to be the crater of a volcano. What had been rain to us that morning was snow at the 7100 foot in elevation of the lodge. The air was fresh.

Someone was heard to say that it was damn cold. Maybe that is the reason we had our picture taken in front of the fireplace in the lodge.

That afternoon it was decided to take another route back to Medford. A leisurely drive seemed like the thing to do. We had a late lunch in Klamath Falls only because we had made turns where we shouldn't have and didn't make some turns where we should have.—Freddie where were you when we needed you.

After arriving back in Medford, we all freshened up. Because we had eaten such a late lunch,

we went looking for a quiet family type of place where we could have some lite snacks and drinks. With very little effort it was found. In the middle of a very nice shopping center (so the girls could do some shopping.) We sat in "Fat's Pool Hall," a perfect place to unwind after a day of doing tourist things. Once again 2 am comes too soon when you are with friends.

Sunday morning, September 25. Ken led us to a 50's style diner for breakfast. After spending two hours eating and taxing the patience of a very nice waitress, we adjourned to the parking lot for another two hours of saying "Good-bye." It was promised by all not to let another ten years go by without getting together again.

Larry Meyer and I were successful in getting two guys to sign up for the TAC Tankers. Vic Ventura and his wife Chris will be in Dayton all the way from Vacaville, CA. Robert Schleih and his wife Jan will be there also, from Marinette, WI. Bob and Marilyn Dorn will be moving to Hill AFB, Utah, so will probably not be able to attend.

Ken Little just retired and is waiting to see what road he will follow. He has an interest in the Morgan Hill area of California. Harold and Cheryl Harrison were not able to attend our meeting. Harold is still taking orders from the Air Force. He owns an electrical contracting company and they do a lot of work for our friends in the Sacramento, CA area.

See you in Dayton.....